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# ADVOCATE OF PEACE.

No. XXI.

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FEBRUARY, 1840.

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## INCONSISTENCIES OF WAR.

WAR is upheld as the guardian of liberty ; but there never was a worse species of despotism than the war-system. Its chief element is coercion. Its spirit, its laws, all its operations are in the highest degree despotic. The commander of an army is invested for the time with powers more absolute than those of the Sultan or the Autocrat. Life and death are suspended on his will ; and it is no very uncommon thing for him to scourge or hang offenders without the least form of trial. There is little more freedom in an army than in the wheels of a factory forced to whirl each in its own place under the impulse of the great central power. The subjection is entire and perfect ; a bondage more constant, more rigid and relentless, than that of Southern slavery ; a stretch of tyranny, a depth of degradation, far beyond that against which our forefathers rebelled

“But war is indispensable to obtain redress of injuries.” Strange sort of redress ; for, in seeking it, we inflict on ourselves an amount of evil tenfold greater than that which we aim to repair. When France refused to pay an indemnity of \$5,000,000 confessedly due to us, not a few thought of compelling payment by force of arms ; but the very proclamation of war would have put an end to all hope of ever getting our claim ; nor could we have commenced hostilities without an outlay of more than ten times as much as the whole debt, or continued the contest a single year, without expending and losing, directly or indirectly, full fifty times as much. France

recently claimed of Mexico about \$600,000 ; Mexico refused to meet the claim ; and for the sake of this paltry sum, both parties concluded to risk, not only the loss of thousands of lives, but the sacrifice of a hundred times as much property ! What a tribunal of justice ! An admirable remedy for the *evils* incident to the intercourse of nations !

“ But we must surely fight in vindication of national honor.” Who can doubt this ? Why, have not the bloodhounds of war, those demi-gods of Christendom itself, been yelling this sentiment in the ear of all mankind from time immemorial ? Nay, did not an orator from “ the chivalrous South ” say on the floor of Congress, that, sooner than have the nation’s honor tarnished by a tame surrender of our late claim on France, he would see *the whole land flow with blood* ? Yes ; commerce and internal enterprise must be crippled for years, and the nation sacrifice hundreds of millions of dollars, and ten thousand widows, and fifty thousand orphans, and half a million of relatives must mourn over the wholesale butcheries of a war undertaken to save the country from the disgrace of—what ? How had we incurred disgrace that could be wiped away only by this horrid process ? “ Why, France has refused to do her duty ! ” *France* refused, and *we* are disgraced because *she* proves recreant to her plighted faith ! A new sort of logic this. My neighbor acknowledges the justness of my claim upon him, but refuses to pay me ; and now, if I do not give him a fair opportunity to destroy half my property that is left, and to blow out my brains into the bargain, my honor is “ clean gone for ever ! ”

“ But we must, at all events, fight for liberty.” Liberty to do what ? “ To subdue empires, and hold them in provincial bondage ? So thought such men as Alexander and Napoleon. Liberty to hold others in slavery ? It was for this the Texans fought, and were applauded by half our nation. Liberty to own ourselves, to acquire and use property, to pursue our own happiness, to frame and administer a government for ourselves ? So thought our forefathers ; but when the slaves of the South, catching the very echo of these sentiments, imitate our revolutionary patriots by conspiracies to regain their own inalienable rights through the blood of their masters, they are denounced as monsters of wickedness ; and the moment a proposition was made or hinted in Congress barely to recognize the republic of colored Haytiens who won their indepen-

dence by essentially the same means with our own forefathers, we heard a Southern stickler for "the right of revolution," and of "war to the hilt," denouncing them as "a nation of slaves who rose, and cut their masters' throats;"—their leader "an insurrectionist and a revolutionist;"—their government "a government of insurrectionists;"—"the only body of men that ever emancipated themselves by butchering their masters." Recognize "insurrectionary negroes? No, never will I! Never will my constituents, be driven to say in effect to our slaves,—‘When you have cut the throats of your masters, you will be acknowledged by England and the Northern States as republican freemen.’” But our revolutionary heroes said all this in effect to every bondman in the world. They went from first to last on the very principle here so indignantly spurned. Were they not all insurrectionists and revolutionists? Do not the great mass of their descendants still assert the right of revolution as altogether unquestionable? We dare not carry out our own principles. If the actors in our Revolution were right, the Haytiens were right, the Texans were right, the Canadians were right, and the slaves at the South would be perfectly justifiable in wading to freedom through the blood of every master that should resist their demand of rights inalienably guaranteed to them by God and nature. SIRIS.

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#### WAR-DEGENERACY OF THE CHURCH.

*"The Church has always been right in regard to peace."*—WILLIAM ALLEN, D. D.

##### NO. I.

Self-reform is a process too humiliating to be urged upon the mass of Christians themselves, without open complaints or secret murmurings. If you will flatter their self-esteem by calling upon them to labor for the reformation of others, to relieve the children of want and suffering, or to spread the gospel through the world, they may as a body respond to your call; but, if you start at home a work of reform which includes themselves among its proper subjects, and press upon them the duty of coöperation, you administer an implicit reproof which many will denounce as a libel on the household of faith. They will tell you, that the church, though confessedly im-